

We continually strive to improve the quality of information given to patients. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this information booklet, please contact the Women & Children's Division, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Mandeville Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 8AL

*Specialist Groups:* Bereavement Group Mar 2010  
SANDS Feb 2009

*Guidelines Meeting:* May 2010, Gynae Leaflets mtg: V3 Feb 2016

*Equality Impact Assessment:* April 2010, V3 Mar 2016

*Scrutiny Panel:* May 2010

*Divisional Board:* May 2010. O&G SDU V3 Jun 2016

*Gynae Patient reps:* V3 Jun 2016

*Clinical Guidelines Subgroup:* Not required

*Patient Experience Group:* Jun 2010. V3 Nov 2016

### Women & Children's Division

## How can I help to reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming into and after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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Authors: J Higgs  
Issue date: January 2017  
Review date: January 2020

Leaflet code: WZZ1235  
Version: 3

# Following the loss of your baby...

## Patient Information Leaflet

If you require an interpretation of this leaflet please see contact details on page 6

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

We wish to extend our sympathy to you and offer you our support at this difficult time.

We hope the information in this booklet will offer you help and guidance in your time of need.

If you need any help, please do not hesitate to ask any member of staff involved in your care.

Antenatal Screening Co-ordinator: .....

Your Consultant is: .....

Consultant's Secretary: .....

## Feelings

Losing a baby is an experience that many will share, but we all react differently. For some, expressions of grief will be overwhelming and public. For others they may be very private, but no less deeply felt. Partners, family and friends may all find it difficult to show their emotions. Many of us need to share our emotions in order to be able to cope with them. These feelings are real and painful, but they are also acceptable and understandable.

Grief may produce physical symptoms, for example disturbed sleep, lack of appetite, nausea or palpitations. These are all normal reactions and may be eased by **talking about** them with professionals, family and friends.

Grief throws our lives out of balance and there are bound to be good days and bad days. Try not to panic—all this is normal. Take time to think through any decisions, as major changes at this time could be unsettling.

## Useful Organisations

### Antenatal Results & Choices (ARC)

73 Charlotte Street  
London W1P 4PN  
0207 631 0280  
HELPLINE: **0207 631 0285**  
info@arc-uk.org      www.arc-uk.org

### Child Bereavement UK

Saunderton Estate  
Wycombe Road  
Saunderton  
Bucks HP14 4BF  
**01494 568900**  
www.childbereavement.org.uk

### Early Pregnancy Loss Group

First Tuesday of the month 7-8.30pm  
Claydon Wing Annex at Stoke Mandeville Hospital  
Just come along or contact Rebecca on 01296 316264

### Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)

**020 7436 5881** (helpline)  
support@uk-sands.org  
[www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org)

### West Herts and Bucks SANDS

07922 119111  
[www.westhertsbucksands.org.uk](http://www.westhertsbucksands.org.uk)

### Twins and Multiple Births Association Bereavement Support Group (TAMBA BSG)

Helpline: **0800 138 0509**  
10.00-13.00 hours and 19.00-22.00 hours daily.

## Having sex and trying for another baby

You should avoid having sex until all of your symptoms have gone. Your periods should return within six to eight weeks, although it may take several months to settle into a regular cycle.

If you don't want to get pregnant you should use contraception immediately. If you do want to get pregnant again, you may want to discuss it with your GP or hospital care team. Make sure you are feeling physically and emotionally well before trying for another pregnancy.

### Please Note:

This leaflet explains some of the most common side-effects that some people may experience. However, it is not comprehensive. If you experience other side-effects and want to ask anything else related to your treatment please speak to the Bereavement nurse on 07584 591182.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

### **Bereavement Office**

Stoke Mandeville Hospital **01296 316646**  
Wycombe Hospital 01494 425233

### **Chaplaincy Department**

Stoke Mandeville Hospital **01296 316675**  
Wycombe Hospital **01494 425072**

### **Consultants' Secretaries**

Stoke Mandeville Hospital  
**01296 315000** and ask for the Obstetric & Gynaecology Secretaries

Wycombe Hospital  
**01494 526161** and ask for the Obstetric & Gynaecology Secretaries

## Surgical Termination

This can be performed within Day Surgery for women up to 13 weeks of pregnancy who are fit to undergo a surgical procedure. This procedure is called vacuum aspiration and is done by an experienced Gynaecologist. A general anaesthetic is given, so all necessary preparations must be strictly followed. The general anaesthetic is given through a fine needle into a vein in the back of the hand. Risks of general anaesthetic will be explained by the anaesthetist.

Vacuum aspiration (suction) involves inserting a tube through the cervix into the uterus. To make this procedure easier, small prostaglandin tablets are inserted into the vagina one to two hours before. These tablets relax the cervix and help to reduce bleeding.

At operation, the cervix is located, washed with antiseptic and dilated. A plastic tube is inserted into the womb and gentle suction is applied to remove the pregnancy tissue. The Gynaecologist checks as carefully as possible to ensure that all the tissue has been removed. Bleeding should not be heavy.

The whole procedure takes 10-15 minutes, after which you will wake up in the recovery area and then return to a bed. Your partner, friend or relative can stay with you by your bed if you wish.

Routine checks are made by medical and nursing staff. A dose of two antibiotics will be given at the time of the procedure to help prevent risk of pelvic infection. You will be allowed home providing you are accompanied by a responsible adult.

If your blood group is Rhesus negative, an injection of Anti-D will be given to you following the procedure.

## Risks

- Those relating to general anaesthetic, these will be discussed with you on admission by the anaesthetist
- Small possibility of pieces of pregnancy tissue being retained, which could lead to bleeding and infection, and probable further operation to remove this tissue
- Very rare possibility of damage or perforation to the uterus due to having instruments inserted. This would require further observation in hospital and possible abdominal surgery

## Aftercare

After your operation it is important that on going home you:

- Rest as much as possible for the next 48 hours
- Do not drive for 24 hours
- Have someone stay with you for 24 hours following the anaesthetic, including when bathing/ showering
- Use sanitary pads, not tampons, until any bleeding finishes (this may last from a few days to a week) to assess blood loss and reduce infection
- Avoid **sexual** intercourse until the bleeding has stopped

If you experience any discomfort, it may be useful to take painkillers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen to take in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

It is important that you contact your GP if you experience any of the following:

- Prolonged heavy bleeding with clots
- Vaginal discharge that looks or smells offensive
- Rise in temperature
- Pain when passing urine

## Blessing

A blessing can take place by the Hospital Chaplain or a Minister known to you. This blessing can occur either with or without you being present. A blessing card can be given to you if you would like it. It will not be possible to determine the sex of the baby, but you may name your baby if you wish to.

## Book of Remembrance

You may like to enter your baby's name in the hospital chapel 'Baby Book of Remembrance' or you may wish to write your own thoughts or a special poem in this book. Please speak to a Chaplain or Bereavement Officer about what you would like to enter into the book.

## Remembrance Service

An annual Baby Remembrance Service is held in a local church in October. Please contact the Bereavement Office for further information.

## Funeral Arrangements

There are a number of options available to you for your baby's funeral, which the Bereavement Officer, Chaplain, Midwives or Nurses will be happy to discuss with you. The Bereavement Officer can also help you to find a Funeral Director in your area.

The hospital can organise the burial of your baby within Aylesbury Cemetery. This is a private ceremony which you are unable to attend. There is a dedicated SANDS memorial stone within the Cemetery if you wish to visit.

If you would like to arrange your own private funeral the Bereavement Office will be able to support you with this.